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Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 03552 201606Z

45
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 SAM-01

OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /162 W
---------- 128388
R 201500Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0302
INFO USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMCONSUL LUANDA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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PAGE 02 LISBON 03552 201606Z

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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CINCLANT
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: GOP EXPECTS PROFESSIONALS' COOPERATION
IN ACHIEVING "REPONSIBLE" PRESS

REF: (A) LISBON 3330; (B) LISBON 3406; (C) LISBON 3392

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY; USUN ALSO FOR AMB SCOTT

SUMMARY: PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF NEWLY NAMED MEMBERS OF HIS MINISTERIAL TEAM GAVE OCCASION FOR MASS COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER TO LAY DOWN POLICY LINE ON INFORMATION. KEYNOTE IS "RESPONSIBILITY", AND GOP EXPECTS TO HAVE PROFESSIONALS' FULL COOPERATION IN ACHIEVING IT. REPLACEMENT MEASURE FOR CURRENT INTERIM PRESS LAW IS ON THE WAY. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTER OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS SANCHES OSORIO IN RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE PRESENTED NEWLY SWORN-IN UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR MASS COMMUNICATIONS LUIS DE BARROS (REF A), NEWLY NAMED DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION FREIRE MONTEZ AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POPULAR CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT VASCO PINTO LEITE. (LATTER REPLACES OUSTED PREDECESSOR, FERNANDO PITEIRA SANTOS REF B). EACH OF FOUR MADE BRIEF REMARKS AND RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS.

2. PREDOMINANT THEME: THE INFORMATION MEDIA HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT IN FULFILLING THE PROGRAM OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT-AND THIS INVOLVES TASK OF EDUCATING AND PREPARING PORTUGUESE PUBLIC TO LIVE IN FREE AND DEOMCRATIC SOCIETY. "TO INFORM IS TO BE ENGAGED (COMPROMETIDO), AND TO ENLIGHTEN A PEOPLE WHICH FOR 48 YEARS HAS BEEN MISINFORMED..AND
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PAGE 03 LISBON 03552 201606Z

IN THIS SENSE WE DO NOT LOOK FOR INFORMATION MEDIA THAT ARE ABSOLUTELY INDEPENDENT" (FREIRE MONTEZ). THE PRINCIPLES BY WHICH THE MEDIA MUST GUIDE THEIR ACTIONS MUST BE FOUND IN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE MFA'S PROGRAM AND THE SPIRIT IN WHICH IT WAS ELABORATED: IMPARTIALITY AND PLURALISM; CRITICISM IS A PART OF MEDIA'S MISSION, BUT ATTACKS AGAINST THE PTINCIPLE OF AUTHORITY ARE NOT (SANCHES OSORIO). MINISTER EMPHASIZED THAT, WHILE GOP

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MUST NOT BE AFRAID OF WORDS OF CRITICISM, NEITHER WILL
IT BE AFRAID TO EXERCISE ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO GUARANTEE
THAT THE MEDIA OPERATE IN RESPONSIBLE MANNER.

3. EXACTLY WHERE THE BOUNDS OF CRITICISM LAPSE INTO
AREA OF IRRESONSIBILITY IS NOT CLEAR FROM MINISTERIAL
TEAM'S REMARKS. GUIDELINES GIVEN INVOLVE "RETRAINING"
OF JOURNALISTS TO RECOGNIZE AND SELECT BETWEEN EVENS WHICH ARE
IMPORTANT AND THOSE SUPERFLUOUS. RESPONDING TO ONE JOURNALIST'S
QUESTION ABOUT HOW PRESS SHOULD HAVE COVERED AUGUST 7 MRPP REALLY
IN DOWNTOWN LISBON (BLOCKED BY MILITARY - REF C), MINISTER SAID
THAT NEWSPAPERS' FUNCTION IS TO GIVE FACTS AND ALSO TO ASSESS
IMPORTANCE WHICH THEY HAVE. (COMMENT:
ON BASIS OF GOP'S PAST REACTION TO MEDIA COVERAGE OF MRPP
EVENTS, WE WOULD INTERPRET THESE CRYPTIC REMARKS TO
MEAN GOP HAS NO OBJECTION TO VER BRIEF COVERAGE OF
BASIC FACTS, BUT WOULD OBJECT TO COVERAGE WHICH TENDED
TO ROMANTICIZE MRPP OR GIVE IMPRESSION THAT ITS INFLUENCE
AND IMPACT ARE ANYTHING OTHER THAN NEGLIGIBLE. MOST
OBJECTIONABLE OF ALL WOULD BE ANY MENTION WHATEVER OF
PARTICIPATION BY ELEMENTS OF ARMED FORCES IN SUCH RALLIES
OR EVEN ATTENDANCE AS SPECTATORS).

4. GOP CURRENTLY HAS AT ITS DISPOSAL FOLLOWING
COMMUNICATIONS/INFORMATION CHANNELS; MINISTRY OF MASS
COMMUNICATIONS, PORTUGUESE TELEVISION (RTP), PORTUGUESE
RADIO (EMISSORA NACIONAL), TWO NEWS AGENCIES (ANI,
LUSITANIA), AND ONE NEWSPAPER (DIARIO DE NOTICIAS-LISBON MORNING
DAILY IN WHICH GOP HOLDS MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER INTEREST). FREIRE
MONTEZ EMPHASIZED THAT GOP WILL NOT GIVE UP ITS CONTROL
OVER ANY OF THESE ORGANS. FURTHERMORE, THESE ORGANS
ALONE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR ACCOMPLISHING EDUCATIVE
MISSION AND, THEREFORE, GOP CONSIDERS COOPERATION OF
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OTHER NEWS ORGANIZATIONS AND OF JOURNALISTS THEMSELVES
TO BE INDISPENSABLE. LATTER WILL BE EXPECTED TO
"RETRAIN" IN ORDER TO CHOOSE NEWS STORIES MORE WISELY
AND TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

5. THE NEW PRESS LAW, DESIGNED TO REPLACE INTERIM
MEASURE UNDER WHICH SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN FINED
AND/OR SUSPENDED (INCLUDING INDEFINITE SUSPENSION OF
MRPP ORGAN LUTA POPULAR), IS TO BE PREPAREED WIHIN
ONE MONTH. DURING THIS MONTH A SPECIALLY NAMED
COMMISSION WILL STUDY A DRAFT PROPOSAL THAT HAS AS ITS
BASIS LEGISLATION ON SAME SUBJECT FROM 1926, A PROJECT
PUT FORWARD IN OLD NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY "LIBERAL WING"
MEMBERS SA CARNEIRO AND PINTO BALSEMAO (CURRENTLY LEADERS
OF CENTRIST PARTIDO POPULAR DEMOCRATICO), AND CERTAIN

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FOREIGN LEGISLATION ON MATTER (PARTICULARLY FRENCH AND ENGLISH). COMMISSION WILL BE FREE TO ALTER TERMS OF DRAFT PROPOSAL, BUT ITS FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS MUST IN TURN BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL TO PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT (CABINET) AND COUNCIL OF STATE. PENDING FINAL APPROVAL, NO INFORMATION IS TO BE RELEASED ON DRAFT MEASURE'S PROVISIONS.

6. COMMISSION MEMBERS ARE: ANTONIO SOUSA FRANCO, PRESIDENT (ONE OF TWO AUTHORS OF DRAFT PROPOSAL); RUI ALMEIDA MENDES (OTHER CO-AUTHOR OF DRAFT); MARCELO REBELO DE SOUSA (PARTIDO POPULAR DEMOCRATICO); ALBERTO ARONS DE CARVALHO (SOCIALIST PARTY); PEDRO SOARES (COMMUNIST PARTY); FIGUEIREDO FILIPE OF EDITORIAL STAFF REPUBLICA AND JOSE DA SILVA PINTO, ASSISTANT EDITOR OF SECULO (NATIONAL JOURNALISTS UNION - UNTIL RECENTLY HEADED BY DE BARROS); ADRIANO LUCAS (PRERESENTING PORTUGUESE DAILY PRESS); AND FRANCISCO PINTO BALSEMAO (OF EXPRESSO, REPRESENTING NON-DAILY PRESS).

7. EVENTUAL PRESS LAW TO EMERGE FROM DELIBERATIONS OF COMMISSION, PLUS SUBSEQUENT POSSIBLE REVISION AND APPROVAL BY CABINET AND COUNCIL OF STATE, WILL NOT APPLY TO RADIO AND TV. A SEPARATE STATUTE IS CONTEMPLATED FOR THEM, ALTHOUGH APPARENTLY NO MEASURE COMPARABLE TO DRAFT PROPOSAL ON PRESS HAS YET BEEN WRITTEN.
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8. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH CONSTRUCTED SO AS TO INCLUDE "REPRESENTATIVES" OF DIFFERENT ELEMENTS PRESS COMMUNITY AND PARTIES TAKING PART IN GOVERNMENT COALITION, COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT LIKELY TO FIND THEMSELVES HOLDING WIDELY DIVERGENT IDEAS. ELEMENTS FROM FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT, WHICH WOULD HAVE DIFFERENT CONCEPTION OF WHAT TERMS "RESPONSIBILITY" AND "PRESS FREEDOM" MEAN, HAVE DELIBERATELY BEEN EXCLUDED. MAKEUP OF COMMISSION SUGGESTS THAT GOP'S INTENTION IS FIRM TO MAKE PRESS MORE RESPONSIBLE.
POST

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